

## **CLAIMS:**

1-16. (cancelled)

17. (new) A schedule manager computer which communicates with a plurality of computer terminals:

- a memory which stores a route information table listing at least one circulation route for a request to be circulated through for approval, wherein the at least one circulation route each comprises at least one organizational position at which the request is to be examined;

- a request receiver configured to receive data comprising an application including at least one request for approval from a computer terminal of an applicant; and

- a route determining control configured to look up the route information table and determine at least one circulation route for a respective request in the application through which the application is to be circulated for examination of the request.

18. (new) A schedule manager computer according to claim 17, wherein the memory further comprises an organization directory which lists for each person an organizational section to which a respective person belongs to and an organizational position the respective person holds, the schedule manager further comprising;

- an applicant identifier configured to look up the organizational directory and identify an organizational section to which the applicant belongs; and

- an examiner identifier configured to look up the organizational directory and identify at least one person as an examiner to examine the request who holds the at least one organizational position, wherein the at least one examiner holds organizational responsibility regarding at least one of the applicant and the identified organizational section.

19. (new) A schedule manager according to claim 18, further comprising a request transmitter configured to send data comprising the application, via the at least one

circulation route, through a computer terminal of all of the at least one examiner for examination of the request.

20. (new) A schedule manager according to claim 19, further comprising a result receiver configured to receive data comprising a result of examination from a computer terminal of each of the at least one examiner.

21. (new) A schedule manager according to claim 20, wherein the request transmitter repeats sending the data comprising the application to a computer terminal of a next examiner on the circulation route when the result receiver receives a result of examination from one examiner on the circulation route.

22. (new) A schedule manager according to claim 20, further comprising a status manager configured to maintain status information of each request indicative of where the request is being examined along the circulation route and a result of examination which has been conducted by an examiner along the circulation route.

23. (new) A method for determining a circulation route of an application, comprising:  
storing a route information table in a memory which lists at least one circulation route for a request to be circulated through for approval, wherein the at least one circulation route each comprises at least one organizational position at which the request is to be examined;  
receiving data comprising an application including at least one request for approval from a computer terminal of an applicant; and  
looking up the route information table and determining at least one circulation route for a respective request in the application through which the application is to be circulated for examination of the request.

24. (new) A method according to claim 23, further comprising:

storing an organization directory in the memory which lists for each person an organizational section to which a respective person belongs to and an organizational position the respective person holds, the schedule manager further comprising;

looking up the organizational directory and identifying an organizational section to which the applicant belongs; and

looking up the organizational directory and identifying at least one person as an examiner to examine the request who holds the at least one organizational position, wherein the at least one examiner holds organizational responsibility regarding at least one of the applicant and the identified organizational section.

25. (new) A method according to claim 24, further comprising sending data comprising the application, via the at least one circulation route, through a computer terminal of all of the at least one examiner for examination of the request.

26. (new) A method according to claim 25, further comprising receiving data comprising a result of examination from a computer terminal of each of the at least one examiner.

27. (new) A method according to claim 26, sending the data comprising the application through the computer terminal of all of the at least one examiner comprises repeating sending the data comprising the application to a computer terminal of a next examiner on the circulation route when the result receiver receives a result of examination from one examiner on the circulation route.

28. (new) A method according to claim 26, further comprising maintaining status information of each request indicative of where the request is being examined along the circulation route and a result of examination which has been conducted by an examiner along the circulation route.